



Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Meeting date: **Thursday, September 22, 2016 from 12:00 PM to 1:10 PM**

Location: Upstairs at the Gardiner Welcome Center

Purpose: Regularly scheduled meeting

Invited Guests: Bear Creek Council

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce serves our community through developing local tourism while endorsing stewardship of the Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Agenda:

1. Chamber Business

1.1. Roll Call & Introductions

Schalene Darr 1min.

Schalene Darr, Scott Demaree, Sabina Strauss, Anna Holloway, Sue Johnson, Neli Karamfilova, Hal Broadhead, Sandy Bierle, Sharon Gilbert.

Anna Holloway excused, all others present.

1.2 Directors /Financial Report

Barbara Shesky 10min.

Update on Office Operations and fiscal year to date budget versus actual.
Centennial Wrap-up.

During the month of August, the visitor center saw 2,869 walk-ins as compared to 2, 279 in 2015.

Gate numbers for August for the north entrance were up 7.42 % and park-wide visitation as up 1.57%.

Our long awaited Centennial celebration was a hit. Things ran smoothly. It is hard to believe after all the preparation that it is now over. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success.

1.3 Approval of Prior Month's Meeting Minutes

Schalene Darr 1min.

Minutes of August 18, 2016

3.2- second paragraph we poll our members

Next paragraph Scott change are to were focused

Hal Motion to approve as amended Sabina second all in favor motion passed
Resolution # 09.22.16-01

2. Committee Business

2.1 Yellowstone National Park Brian Suderman 5 min.

Current events in Yellowstone

The fires are quieting down. Rehab work and cleanup in progress, this rain will quiet them down even more. As of sept 21st 21 fires 62,000 acres burned highest number of acres burned since 88 4 made up the majority. The maple fire was the largest. All structures protected.

Arch event -Sept 7th incident command had a wrap-up meeting there were little glitches but it ran smoothly it helped set up procedures in Arch Park.

Steve lobst is retiring. He was good for the park and has a lot if institutional knowledge- Scott he was good for our community as well.

Reviewed snowmobile lottery.

Norris to Mammoth still closed till Monday October 7th for construction.

Arch event numbers estimate is around 5,500 there was no official count. The airport parking was 3/4full.

The event was great but didn't do much for but then the river closed at the time the west and south entrances were under siege.

2.2 Properties and Facilities Schalene Darr 5 min.

Updates on the Public Restroom Build

The reno will start on the 15th.

Xanterra has four housing modules on the Rodeo grounds and they will be there until they can get a property dispute straightened out.

FFA will be using the grounds for an event.

2.3 Marketing Sandy Bierle 5 min.

Updates on Marketing

The walking map Lynn Chan is on board to make changes. Sandy will come up with a list on what needs to change on it. The artwork new buildings that will be up. Sandy will work on it in the next two weeks.

Wouldn't this be just a chamber members? That would be a filter to the list. If you want to be on the map you need to be a member.

2.4 Membership **Anna Holloway 5 min**

Updates on Membership

Anna absent- Schalene

Look at raising dues next year.

2.5 CVB **Jean Modesette 10 min.**

Updates on CVB and Tourism Advisory Council Meeting October 2-4 here in Gardiner.

Jean unable to attend.

Barbara/Schalene: The Tourism Advisory Committee, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development and the Directors of the regions and CVBs will be here for their annual October meeting. Lodging has been found amongst several different properties. We will be hosting a BBQ and Music either in Arch Park or at the Community Center if the weather doesn't cooperate. We continue to work on the new website design and have opted into a coop social media campaign on Trip Advisor.

2.6 Nominating **Hal Broadhead 2 min.**

Updates on possible future Board members

Sandy and Scott will have served their two terms and will need to go off the Board. Sabina and Hal will be running again and Hal has found two folks that want to run and serve.

3. Old Business- Action Items **Schalene Darr 10 min.**

3.1 Bear Creek Council Letter

Our Mission statement is what we refer to in situations like this:

The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce serves our community through developing local tourism while endorsing stewardship of the Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The Chamber Board has been approached by Chamber Member, Bear Creek Council to write a letter to FWP opposing the hunting of Grizzly Bears should delisting move forward.

Review of the fact:

So many people are coming here to see the animals, this tourism is what drives our overall economy.

If there is a hunt the limit would be seven. Sixty-one were killed by the states as problem bears.

We support due process. We took a stand on the mining as pro air, wildlife and clean water if anything can be done without impacting this, then so be it.

Schalene did speak to the Jackson Hole Chamber President. We will be following our procedure. Schalene feels that the letter is fine.

We would poll -support or not support the Chamber writing a letter to FWP that would go something like this:

“We as your Board have been approached by chamber member Bear Creek Council to take a stand regarding..... We want to find out if our members want the Chamber to take a stand against Grizzly Bear hunting.”

We will send out the poll question. Barb and Hal get that statement /question prepared with Nathan Varley involved too. Indicate that the ask came from the Bear Creek Council. Put a reminder to Membership in the newsletter to chamber members to check their email and vote.

Schalene brought up that Anna had offered to call members to tell them to check their email since we have concerns regarding the number of members that respond to our questions. We just want to do the right thing. Put on website, Facebook page and in newsletter. But there are concerns as to the dialogue the caller would use.

Ultimately we want the protection of economy and avoid bad press.

3.2 Winter Business

Discussion regarding our push for businesses to stay open in winter in light of new information: Xanterra has cancelled some winter tours and what that means for Gardiner, also transportation issues that visitors face when they want to come to Gardiner any time of year.

Winter reservations for Xanterra winter tours out of Mammoth have not been what they were hoping for so they have cancelled or reduced some of their tours into the Northern Range and down to Canyon.

Also, there are issues of transportation making it very difficult for people who want to come here and spend a few days in Gardiner before going into the interior if they don't want to rent a car and have it sit in the parking lot for days.

There is talk of a local trying to set up as an UBER driver which will be helpful if they can accomplish it.

4. New Business Action Items

Sabina Strauss 10 min.

4.1 Chamber Political Endorsement

Discussion and vote on whether the Chamber should endorse local resident Bill Berg for Park County Commissioner.

Sabina thinks that The Board should endorse Bill Berg for Commission.

Schalene: Bill is great and for our county and Gardiner but she feels like what if someone comes to use and asks us to endorse for Governor or President.

Sabina the person running would need to be a chamber member and in good standing. Endorse as the Board.

Susan: I can't do that.

Forum on October 6th get that in the newsletter.

If we get in the political realm we could have more to deal with.

Sabina -Motion to support Bill as a candidate for Park County Commissioner as the Chamber Board. Schalene second.

All in favor: 1
All Opposed: 4
Abstain: 3
Motion fails

4. Public Comment

5 min.

Resort tax is taking applications must be submitted by October 31st this year. The deadline has been moved up.

Joe Gross also thinks that not endorsing political candidates is a good idea.

5. Date of next meeting.

1 min.

October 20th at noon here

October meeting cancelled

Next meeting November 17th.

Meeting adjourned.